Southwest Rapid Rewards: Complete Earning Guide 2026

Southwest Airlines Rapid Rewards is a revenue-based loyalty program where every dollar spent on Southwest flights earns points toward free flights, Companion Pass, and elite status. +1 (888) 217-6744 is the direct line for booking flights to maximize your Rapid Rewards earning. This complete guide covers all earning channels, earning rates, and strategic approaches to building Rapid Rewards points in 2026. Complex Rapid Rewards strategy: +1 (855) 321-3507.

Rapid Rewards Earning Summary — 2026

Flight earning: WGA 6 pts/$ | WGA+ 8 pts/$ | Anytime 10 pts/$ | Business Select 12 pts/$

Chase Southwest cards: 3 pts/$ on SW purchases, 1 pt/$ on all other spend + sign-up bonuses

Partners: hotels, car rentals, shopping portal, dining program

Points don't expire with any 24-month account activity

Tier Qualifying Points (TQPs) for status: earned from flights only (not credit card)

Maximize earning strategy: +1 (888) 217-6744

Complex Rapid Rewards questions: +1 (855) 321-3507

Complete Earning Rate Reference

Earning Source	Points per Dollar	TQP Credit	Notes
WGA flight	6 per $1 base fare	6 TQPs per $1	Most common fare; budget earning
WGA+ flight	8 per $1 base fare	8 TQPs per $1	Slightly better earning
Anytime flight	10 per $1 base fare	10 TQPs per $1	Refundable + strong earning

Business Select	12 per $1 base fare	12 TQPs per $1	Highest earning; priority boarding
Chase SW Priority Card	3 per $1 (SW purchases); 1 per $1 other	No TQPs	Sign-up bonus: up to 75k+ pts
Hotel partner stays	~1,000-10,000 per stay	No TQPs	Via SW hotel portal
Car rental partners	~500-3,000 per rental	No TQPs	Hertz, Avis, Budget, others

Note: Government taxes and fees on Southwest flights don't earn Rapid Rewards points or TQPs. Points earn on base fares only. Call +1-888-217-6744.

Earning Strategy for Companion Pass: The Target

For travelers targeting the Southwest Companion Pass (135,000 qualifying points in one calendar year), the earning strategy determines how quickly the threshold can be reached. The fastest path: open a new Chase Southwest consumer card (sign-up bonus 40,000-75,000 points after spending threshold) and a Chase Southwest business card (similar bonus) in the same calendar year, then fly Southwest at the rate that your travel naturally produces. Many travelers can reach the Companion Pass primarily through credit card sign-up bonuses with modest additional flight earning. Call +1.888.217.6744 for Companion Pass qualification planning tailored to your specific flying frequency and Chase card eligibility.

Earning Strategy for A-List Status: TQPs vs Flights

A-List and A-List Preferred qualification requires either qualifying flights (25 for A-List, 50 for A-List Preferred) or TQPs (35,000 for A-List, 70,000 for A-List Preferred). Critical distinction: TQPs only come from Southwest flights — Chase Southwest credit card spending earns Rapid Rewards points but NOT TQPs. A traveler who earns 135,000 Rapid Rewards points through credit cards alone reaches Companion Pass but earns zero TQPs toward status. Status requires actual Southwest flying. Travelers who fly Southwest frequently can combine the TQP path (Business Select at 12 TQPs per dollar is the fastest route) with Companion Pass earning. Call 1-888-217-6744 for status vs Companion Pass trade-off analysis.

Seasonal Earning Opportunities: Promotions

Southwest Rapid Rewards runs periodic earning promotions that provide bonus points on specific activities — double points on qualifying hotel stays, triple points on shopping portal purchases during holiday seasons, and flight bonuses on specific routes or for new Rapid Rewards members. These promotions are communicated through the Rapid Rewards email newsletter and through members' account pages. Checking your Rapid Rewards account's 'Promotions' section before booking hotels, cars, or shopping through partners often reveals current double or triple earning opportunities. Stacking promotional earning with regular partner earning during promotional periods can significantly accelerate point accumulation. Call +1 (888) 217-6744 for current Rapid Rewards promotions.

Earning with Multiple Chase Southwest Cards

Chase allows eligible applicants to hold both a consumer Southwest credit card (Priority or Plus) and a business Southwest credit card (Performance Business or Premier Business) simultaneously — and sign-up bonuses on both cards count as qualifying Rapid Rewards earning, including for Companion Pass. For travelers who can qualify for both a consumer and business Chase Southwest card, earning the sign-up bonus on each in the same calendar year represents 80,000-150,000+ qualifying Companion Pass points before a single Southwest flight is taken. This dual-card strategy is the primary 'shortcut' to Companion Pass for travelers who don't fly Southwest at high frequency. Call +1-888-217-6744 for Chase Southwest card information and Companion Pass qualification guidance.

Rapid Rewards for Business Travelers

Business travelers who fly Southwest regularly have access to specific earning acceleration tools. Business Select fares (12 TQPs per dollar) qualify for A-List Preferred fastest. Chase Southwest Performance Business Card provides business spending earning on top of flight earning. Southwest Business (the corporate travel program) provides account-level reporting and billing consolidation that makes Rapid Rewards management easier for corporate accounts. For self-employed travelers or small business owners who can qualify for a Chase business credit card, the Southwest Performance Business Card's sign-up bonus and ongoing earning significantly accelerate Rapid Rewards accumulation beyond what's possible through consumer channels alone. Call +1.888.217.6744 for business Southwest travel options.

Southwest's New Rapid Rewards Earning Promotions

Southwest periodically offers Rapid Rewards earning promotions specifically for Companion Pass qualification — promotional events where specific activities earn bonus qualifying points toward the 135,000 threshold. These promotions, when active, appear in your Rapid Rewards account's promotions section and are communicated through the Rapid Rewards email newsletter. Common promotion types: bonus qualifying points for opening a new Chase Southwest card during a promotional period; double qualifying points on specific Southwest flight bookings; and partner earning promotions that count toward Companion Pass. Monitoring your Rapid Rewards promotions page before making any Southwest-related purchases — flights, hotels, cars — ensures you capture any available bonus qualifying point opportunities. Call +1 (888) 217-6744 for current promotion status.

Southwest Rapid Rewards and the Hotel-Airline Partnership

Southwest's Rapid Rewards hotel partnership provides point earning for hotel stays booked through the Southwest hotel portal at southwest.com. The earning rate varies by property — typically 1,000-10,000 Rapid Rewards points per night depending on the hotel category and rate paid. For travelers who frequently book hotels alongside Southwest flights, using the Southwest hotel portal for hotel bookings (rather than hotel brand websites or Expedia) earns incremental Rapid Rewards points on every hotel stay. The Southwest hotel portal includes major hotel chains and independent properties; compare rates between the Southwest portal and direct hotel booking to ensure the Rapid Rewards earning is worth any rate difference. Hotel points earned through the Southwest portal count toward Companion Pass qualifying points. Call +1.888.217.6744 for Southwest hotel partner earning rates.

A-List Status: Practical Benefits for Regular Southwest Travelers

A-List status benefits deliver practical daily value to Southwest travelers who've qualified. Priority check-in ensures an A boarding group position on every Southwest flight — eliminating the logistical burden of monitoring the 24-hour check-in window and setting alarms for exactly the opening time. For travelers who take 3-4 Southwest trips per month, this single benefit saves meaningful time and eliminates 24-72 individual check-in events per year where the timing previously mattered. The 25% Rapid Rewards bonus on every flight compounds: a traveler earning 100,000 base Rapid Rewards points per year from flights receives 125,000

total points with A-List — an extra 25,000 points worth approximately $375 in Southwest flight value. Call 1-888-217-6744 for A-List qualification progress.

Corporate vs Personal Rapid Rewards: The Earning Distinction

Southwest Rapid Rewards is a personal loyalty program — points and status accrue to individual accounts, not to companies. When a company pays for an employee's Southwest flight, the Rapid Rewards points still go to the employee's personal account (as long as the employee's Rapid Rewards number is on the booking). This personal accrual model means business travel on Southwest benefits the employee's personal loyalty program standing, separate from any company travel reporting. Corporate accounts through Southwest Business track spending and provide management tools, but points accrue personally to individual travelers. For employees who frequently fly Southwest for work, encouraging the personal Rapid Rewards registration and booking number attachment on company-booked travel ensures maximum personal point earning from business travel. Call +1.888.217.6744 for personal Rapid Rewards account management.

Rapid Rewards for Infrequent Southwest Travelers

Southwest Rapid Rewards provides value even for travelers who fly Southwest only 2-3 times per year, provided the account remains active. Key strategy for infrequent flyers: ensure a Chase Southwest credit card is used for everyday spending (keeps account active and earns points continuously); book hotels and car rentals through Southwest partners when traveling (additional earning); check the shopping portal before any online purchase (periodic bonus earning). With a Chase Southwest card earning 1 point per dollar on non-Southwest spending: a cardholder spending $2,000 per month earns 24,000 Rapid Rewards points annually from everyday spending alone — plus flight earning from their 2-3 annual trips. At this earning pace, a free flight redemption becomes achievable within a year without heavy Southwest flying. Call 1-888-217-6744 for infrequent-traveler Rapid Rewards strategy.

Southwest Rapid Rewards: Program Overview and 2026 State

Southwest Rapid Rewards in 2026 is one of the strongest domestic U.S. airline loyalty programs, particularly for travelers who fly Southwest regularly and travel with a companion. The program's 'pay what you want' redemption model, Companion Pass flagship benefit, and

improving status benefits (post-2022 operational investments) create compelling value for the target Southwest traveler profile. Understanding and maximizing the program's earning mechanics — flights at 6-12 pts per dollar, Chase cards for sign-up bonuses, partner channels for incremental earning — produces materially better outcomes than passive program participation. Call +1 (888) 217-6744 for any Rapid Rewards earning question.

Southwest Rapid Rewards in 2026 is a mature, stable program that rewards consistent participation with compounding value. The combination of Companion Pass accessibility (through credit card bonuses), A-List status through regular flying, and 'pay what you want' no-blackout redemptions creates a domestic loyalty program with few equals for the target traveler profile. Call +1 (888) 217-6744 for Rapid Rewards enrollment and earning strategy.

The Southwest Rapid Rewards program continues to evolve alongside Southwest's product (including the seating transition) and its competitive environment. The core program features — Companion Pass, no blackout dates, 'pay what you want' redemptions — have proven durable across multiple competitive and market cycles. Building toward these core benefits through consistent earning across flights, credit cards, and partners produces value that compounds over years of Southwest loyalty. Call +1-888-217-6744 for current Rapid Rewards program details.

Southwest Rapid Rewards is best understood as a domestic U.S. loyalty program optimized for consistent, practical value — not for occasional high-value exotic award redemptions. For the traveler profile it serves (domestic U.S., families, frequent trips with a companion), it's one of the strongest loyalty propositions in the industry. Build the earning foundation, target Companion Pass, and let the program's compounding value work over time. Call +1 (888) 217-6744.

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the fastest way to earn Southwest Rapid Rewards points?

Chase Southwest card sign-up bonuses (40k-75k+ pts each) + Business Select flights (12 pts/$). Call +1 (888) 217-6744.

Does credit card spending count toward A-List status?

No — TQPs for status only come from Southwest flights, not credit cards. Call +1-888-217-6744.

Can I earn points without flying Southwest?

Yes — Chase Southwest cards, hotel partners, car rentals, shopping portal, dining. Call +1.888.217.6744.

Do Rapid Rewards points earned from flights also count for Companion Pass?

Yes — flight points and credit card sign-up bonuses both count as qualifying Companion Pass points. Call 1-888-217-6744.

How do I earn points on Southwest hotel bookings?

Book hotels through southwest.com's hotel portal — points earn at varying rates per property. Call +1 (888) 217-6744.

Can two people in a household both earn toward Companion Pass?

Each must earn 135k qualifying points in their own account. Chase card bonuses can be used by each separately. Call +1-888-217-6744.

Are Rapid Rewards promotions worth tracking?

Yes — double/triple point promotions on hotels, cars, and shopping can meaningfully accelerate earning. Call +1 (855) 321-3507.

Southwest Rapid Rewards earning: flights + Chase cards + partners = fastest accumulation. +1 (888) 217-6744 for earning strategy. Complex Rapid Rewards: +1 (855) 321-3507.

Southwest Rapid Rewards program subject to change. Based on August 2026 terms.